



NEWS RELEASE

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NASS SURVEY MEASURES ECONOMIC HEALTH OF WA FARMERS AND RANCHERS

NASDA interviewers representing USDA's Washington Field Office of the National Agricultural Statistics Service are contacting local farmers and ranchers asking financial questions for the 2007 Agricultural Resource Management Survey (ARMS).

The study is being conducted during February and March. Producers will be asked for detailed facts on production expenses, assets, liabilities, sales, and operation characteristics.

This helps serve the agricultural community in many ways:

- ▶ **Costs of production for Apple growers** are being studied this year to help formulate policy and budgets.
- ▶ **Federal grants** to our State and community are allocated based on per capita income projections from ARMS data and other sources.
- ▶ **Grower Associations** and elected representatives use the results to create and support farm policy—including estate tax reform—that promotes production agriculture.
- ▶ **Universities** use the data to teach strategies for increasing productivity and efficiency on operations, and for retirement and succession planning.
- ▶ **Producers** use the data to determine the feasibility and profit gained by expanding or changing aspects of their operation.

“Just about every federal policy and program that affects U.S. farmers and farm families is based on information from ARMS,” said Dennis Koong, Deputy Director, Washington Field Office of the National Agricultural Statistics Service. “That’s why participation in ARMS is so important,” “Producer participation in ARMS ensures that decisions affecting farmers, their families, their businesses and their communities are based on the facts, straight from the source”, Koong explained.

Producers chosen to participate in the Agricultural Resource Management Survey may have been mailed a questionnaire or will be visited by an interviewer during the January through March data-collection period. NASS is also conducting the 2007 Census of Agriculture and to help reduce the amount of time spent by farmers, completing the ARMS form will also fulfill their obligation of responding to the Census of Agriculture.

As with all NASS surveys, information provided by respondents is confidential by law. NASS safeguards the confidentiality of all responses, ensuring that no individual producer or operation can be identified. Results of the survey will be available in August 2008. To obtain other agricultural statistics, visit the National Agricultural Statistics Service website at www.nass.usda.gov